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## NELLY NOELL, THE LIGHT-KEEPER'S TREASURE.

A ROMANCE

Of England, France and Italy.

BY GEORGE P. BURNHAM.

[CONTINUED.]

### CHAPTER XXI.

"THE LADY IN SABLES."



At the appointed hour of supper at the time indicated upon the strange card Wilford had received, he was prompt in his attendance at the Hotel Francis, where he presented his singular looking tallman, for admittance to the apartments of the "Lady in Sables."

He was shown at once to the door of a large room, outside of which stood two servants, dressed in the identical livery he had twice seen in Paris, when his wealthy patron called upon him. The one of them, without a word, he handed a card with "Wilford" engraved upon it.

"Enter monsieur," said the attendant, instantly, and with an earnest politeness. The door opened, and closed quickly—and the artist found himself entirely alone, in a long drawing-room which was richly-furnished, and which opened into another apartment beyond it. This latter room seemed to be brilliantly lighted, and, as he left the first door he had entered, a servant girl came across the apartment, pointed him to the elegantly curtained archway that led into the inner room, or parlor—and said, as she passed out:

"Madame awaits you—walk in, monsieur."

The curtain was immediately drawn noiselessly aside, and a perfect glow of brilliant light burst upon the sight of the startled artist, as he entered this magnificently appointed apartment.

The gorgeousness of the room, the superb furniture, its rich velvety carpet and massive curtains, its profusion of divans, lounges, and costly mirrors, struck the young artist with surprise and admiration, because he had made no calculations upon being so sumptuously received. But his attention was very quickly attracted from the furnishings to the only occupant of the room.

A woman of commanding and graceful figure approached him, as he advanced fairly into the room, and in exquisite French, said:

"Monsieur Wilford, you are very welcome. Pray be seated," and she pointed him to an inviting lounge at the side of the spacious apartment.

She was attired in a magnificent black satin dress, cut low at the shoulders, her arms were bare, save where a rich diamond bracelet clasped the splendidly rounded wrist, and about her throat, and pendant upon her snow-white bosom, hung a string of heavy pearls. A rich girdle of pearls was also suspended around her zone, and a shawl of pure Mechlin hung loosely on her left arm. A complete domino concealed her entire features, however; and, except that he observed her flowing ringlets were deep brown—he could not discover a single lineament of the lady's face.

"I heard you had arrived in town," said the lady, pleasantly, "and I sent you my address. I thank you for your prompt attention."

"I am rather your debtor, madame, for this honor," said Wilford.

"I sent for you, monsieur, to explain a trifling riddle to you, at least, an enigma as it has seemed to you; and to order another picture, perhaps."

"You are very kind, madame. May I not, without giving you offence, at the outset ask whom I now have the honor of speaking with?"

"No offence, Wilford—but, *pardonnez moi!* I cannot answer that at present. I have a desire to be convinced by you in reference to one or two matters which deeply concern both you and me, whether I am rightly informed or not; and I wish to explain to your own satisfaction another matter in which I am implicated. When this is done, you shall know my name and station, without scruple or delay."

"But you are 'Marie,' are you not?"

"Marie, if you will, then—yes, for the time being. That was my *nom de guerre*, for the occasion."

"And the beggar-girl of the Pont des Fleurs?" said Wilford.

"Yes, and no. Once I was there, in person, attended by a friend close at hand. At the other meeting, an employee of mine assumed the garb, to arrest your particular notice, and to try your charity. Thus begun, I assumed the name of Marie, and from that time I continued to carry out my design."

"And what was your final object?"

"You shall see, monsieur. Men are treacherous creatures! I do not mean making this a sweeping charge against all men, for there is no rule without its exception. Still, I repeat, men are inconstant and unstable."

"And women?" queried Wilford, mischievously.

"Yes, and women, too," acknowledged the fair speaker. "But, in your case, I learned, no matter how, that you had become attached to the image or the reality of a poor penniless girl who adored you, and whom you would have wedded, probably, but for her indigence and your own."

"Was not madame misinformed?" asked Wilford, at this announcement.

"Perhaps I was; your heart will tell you, Wilford."

"But, I assure you—"

"You need not assure me, monsieur. Listen, and I will tell you the history of the affair. You loved one Nelly Noell, but neither you nor she knew it, seasonably. You met her in poverty, when you also was as poor as she. Am I right?"

"Proceed, madame."

"She loved you—how devotedly and warmly you never knew. You met her, I say, under adverse circumstances, you left her to mourn your departure and your subsequent absence. You did not forget her, but she could not speak her love, and when you came to think and feel how dear she might have been to you, it was too late, for Nelly was lost to you!"

A high escaped young Wilford's lips, in spite of himself.

"You came to Paris, and placed her sweet image upon canvass, as you remembered her, and O, how faithfully! I saw your gem of art, and would have purchased it; but then, from your own lips, I learned how deeply you prized the counterpart, when the original had passed beyond your reach!"

"I own it, madame."

"She loved you—how devotedly and warmly you never knew. You met her, I say, under adverse circumstances, you left her to mourn your departure and your subsequent absence. You did not forget her, but she could not speak her love, and when you came to think and feel how dear she might have been to you, it was too late, for Nelly was lost to you!"

"The Lady Helen was fortunate in possessing such a face, madame, else I might have passed her as I had a thousand other brilliant women, and even a hundred pictures, would not please my taste," said Wilford, romantically.

"Ere, monsieur! Had the lady no charms save of face and form? Was she not the proud daughter of a marquis? Were you her peer? Where was your discrimination and your love of such beauty only, when you saw and fled from the light-keeper's daughter?"

"The charm of station, nobility, wealth, madame—may be surroundings of advantage to a lovely woman, in the eyes of some connoisseurs, but a beautiful and coolly framing around an indifferent or unworthy picture, would not please my taste, or satisfy my desires!"

"Well, let that pass. You see a resemblance in her face to that of Nelly, and you love her. Would you wed her, Wilford?"

This query, so directly given, took the young man by surprise.

"Madame!" he said.

"Monsieur," she replied; "I asked you fairly, would you wed this lady?"

"And I answer, madame—that I am—"

"Surprised at my impertinence," continued

the lady, finishing the sentence for him. "Well then, you need not answer this—but let me now add what I most desire to confess to you."

"I am all attention, lady."

"Wilford," she continued, "the circumstances of the case will plead excuse for my forgetfulness of self and sex, in this admission. We are alone, here, and no ear but yours can hear what I have to say. I have watched your course for a long period, and I have loved you, as you have already been made aware, as woman rarely loves a man! You cannot see my face, but it is not perhaps displeasing. I am wealthy, youthful, guiltless of thought or deed in life that ill becomes a woman, beloved by none and loving none but you; and I would fill that place within your heart which Nelly would have occupied, had you but owned her while you might."

"Madame—I—"

"My fortune is ample, I am mistress of a million in my own right. I lay my heart and means at your disposal, before you have proposed to Helen; and have been, perhaps, rejected."

"Madame! Marie, whoever you may be, I can only say that I owe you much, and would require the love you so generously have confessed, but—"

"You love the brilliant Helen better, monsieur!" continued the strange lady, wildly.

"My heart is gone, Marie, gone, out of my own keeping."

"And Helen de Brandt possesses it?"

"Do not press me farther, but pardon my preference."

"Go then, monsieur, I have done! I had forgotten myself, I had shamed my sex. I listened my poor heart that yours was not a flint! In my platitude of confidence and affection, I lost sight of my womanhood, and you discard me. Be it so. We shall meet no more. Respect the memory that should attach to an interview like this, remember me only as 'poor Marie,' and be assured that she will still pray for your happiness, even in the arms of Helen de Brandt!"

The lady placed her kerchief convulsively to her lips, and with a sigh, rushed from the apartment.

A moment afterward, a servant entered and said:

"Monsieur's carriage waits."

Wilford started up, and quickly departed, overwhelmed, with astonishment, confusion and painful regrets at this unexpected and remarkable interview.

### CHAPTER XXII.

THE PROPOSAL.

This curious meeting described in our last chapter proved a serious damper upon the ardor of young Wilford, in his *amor*. He now saw that his talents, which had raised him so suddenly into notice at Paris, was the cause, probably, of this disagreeable episode in his life. It was a singular result, but what would not a loving woman perform for the object of her earnest affections? In this instance, a lady of rank and splendid fortune had assumed the meanness of disguises, had followed clandestinely upon his heels for months, had offered him her hand and means, without scruple and without encouragement, and all at a venture! It was a case of madness!

To Manfred's repeated and importunate inquiries, Wilford returned but the briefest answers, assuring him that all should be explained in due time—but that his pledge of honor prevented him from entering into details at present, in reference to his interview, on the day succeeding which, it was observed that the "lady in sables" broke up her establishment, and peremptorily quitted Venice, without further ceremony.

The gloom temporarily caused by this incident was very quickly dissipated, however, in Wilford's case, by his meeting with the de Brandts on the following evening. The ever charming Helen and Hortense were more beautiful and more interesting than usual, even. Time and distance from home improved both the fair daughters, and the young companion-lovers made excellent progress in their suits. A fortnight passed away, and the interviews between them had been happy and frequent.

Though no hint of suspicion as to the objects of Manfred and Wilford was given on the part of the parents, yet the marquis and the marchioness were by no means inattentive observers of what was evidently going on among the young people.

"Do you observe the familiarity of Hortense and Manfred? They asked the marchioness of her husband, one day when they were together."

"Do you think the intimacy that is growing between Helen and young Wilford?" responded her husband, quaintly, in reply.

"Surely I cannot avoid it," said the lady.

"Do you object to it, in any way?" she added.

"Not a whit—not a whit, by Jove! If they are brave fellows, to be sure; and the girls will wed somebody, sooner or later. Let them enjoy themselves, I will manage it all to suit my wishes, and yours."

"Manfred's family and fortune are not unequal to the position and means of our Hortense," continued the marchioness. "But this Wilford, what of him? Helen evidently favors him above the scores of flatterers that continually surround her."

"I see it all, and secretly rejoice at it, my dear. But we must not let her, or him, know this at present. Time will prove the boy. I know his history. He is the intimate friend of young Manfred, a talented but poor artist. He has been well educated and possesses a good head and an honest heart, I think. I shall continue to watch them, as you will, also; time, I say, will prove how worthy he may be."

A month elapsed, and the gay circle of friends and acquaintances who were permitted to enjoy the society of the de Brandt family in Venice, had long since decided in their own minds how matters were progressing. The beaux and courtiers and fortune-hunters who flit about this match-making *local*, had given up the chase, in favor of the two clearly favorite winners; and the lovers seemed to be having the field entirely to themselves. Manfred had already secretly declared himself to Hortense, who had blushing accepted his offer, subject to her parents' approval—and Wilford had gone so far as to hint to his lovely Helen, that his future hopes centred in her smiling approval of his confession and his attachment.

At a convenient opportunity, the eldest daughter approached her fond but eccentric parent with the design of explaining to him her position and desire, though she had no clear idea how her propositions might be received by him.

"Father," she said, modestly, "I know you love your daughter, for you have never, once in life, crossed her wishes."

"You are right, dear Helen. My fortune is your fortune, you know, my aim your constant happiness. What will you ask?"

"A boon, father, of joy or woe to me, as you may elect."

"So serious, daughter! Then you have well considered your request, I am sure. It is so important as this!" continued the marquis, feelingly. "What has happened?"

"You shall know all the secret, anon, dear father."

"Have you thought of marriage, daughter?"

"Not at present, no;—but—"

"I had hoped that you would favor the man I have already chosen for you, Helen, among our friends, when you should think of this."

"I have already made my own election, father, if you approve it."

"What! My daughter Helen has not committed herself in this important step, without consulting her parents in regard to it? Surely you have informed the marchioness of this?"

"I come to you first, my father, to you who have never yet denied me a favor or a desire when expressed to you."

"And you have accepted an offer, Helen?"

"Only provisionally."

"Is he a prince, my daughter?"

"A what! No, father, no!"

"A duke, or count?"

"Neither."

"The son of a noble, at least—"

"He has no drop of gentle blood in his veins, father, but—"

"Then he has fortune, surely. My daughter's dowry is a mine of wealth; and he must tell down ready gold who wins her hand and purse."

"He has no fortune, father, save what God has sent him in the shape of goodness, worth and genius."

"Poor, penniless! No name, no fame! Daughter, you wrong my confidence; and I protest against your choice. Where does he dwell?"

"In Venice, father."

"So near us! Have I seen him? Is he one of the fawning well-dressed fools, that force themselves in, hordes, about us here? We will return to France, forthwith, my daughter."

"Father!"

"Nay, Helen, do not urge this suit. Do not offend me with such a whim, when I would make you noble, respect-d, noted, as you deserve to be, in the future."

"One more word, dear father, and I have done. The time has been when even you, I think, would not have spoken thus. The time has been when you did not thus value title, or the world's opinion. I did not think you had thus sadly changed."

Your daughter is the same being now, as when the days were darker on your path and on hers! Our Father in heaven has been gracious, and with the same generous hand

that has placed us in almost royal affluence, he has dispensed to another, in *proportion* bulk, the choicest riches of the heart and mind, which he will turn to laudable account. That man your Helen loves, with all her soul! Must she reject him, father?"

"The days of which you speak, happily, are long since past, my daughter. I would have you wed the man that shall be worthy of yourself and of the brilliant fortune that your father gives the bride. I love you, now, dear Helen," he continued, kindly, "as fondly as when those same dark days came over us, and I will think of this. Rejoice. I will confer with the marchioness, and you shall know our pleasure on the morrow."

Helen de Brandt was totally unprepared for any such demonstration of aristocratic ideas, on the part of her father, as this interview had so suddenly indicated. 'She had always been taught a different theory! Until the moment he had thus confessed it—though he had not adhered to his present position very tenaciously—he had always been led to believe that, of all things in earth, mere title was the most inconsiderable of matters, in her father's esteem of men or women.'

The suspense that followed upon this meeting with her loved parent—whose slightest wish it had ever been her highest joy to gratify—was almost intolerable. How would he decide? What influence might not the marchioness bring to bear in favor of her husband's aims and purposes? What would poor Wilford do? And what must be the consequence to her own heart, in the event of her father's adherence to his stated opinion?

A night of anguish passed, and morning only brought a constant hope of divorce to Helen's mind. Was there no hope that the marquis would recant, or recede, from his views?

Wilford knew nothing of what was transpiring, and was on the point of calling at the mansion of the marquis, when he unexpectedly received, through that gentleman's steward, a summons to his residence.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

HOPES AND FEARS.

Wilford responded immediately to this invitation of the marquis, and upon reaching the mansion, the artist was shown at once into the private room of de Brandt, where he found him alone, and awaiting him, as it appeared.

"Monsieur," said the marquis, "you are prompt in your coming. Promptness in business affairs is a virtue, monsieur. Take a chair; I have business with you."

"What can I do to oblige you?" said Wilford, respectfully.

"I am but a plain man, in matters like that which causes this interview, monsieur. You can deeply oblige me, if you will."

"I am most ready, I assure you," said Wilford, anxiously, "to do anything in my humble way—anything in my power, to oblige the father of the beautiful Helen de Brandt."

"It is in your power, monsieur, to grant what I now demand."

"Believe me, then, it shall be done. What will the marquis ask?"

"That you formally and instantly renounce all claim upon my daughter's hand."

"Monsieur!" exclaimed Wilford, excitedly and surprised.

"Here is pen, ink and paper. Write, monsieur!"

"But, really—I am unprepared to—"

"It matters nothing—I will dictate."

"But, how have you—why have you—"

"I insist, monsieur, upon this point. You have proposed to her, already."

"You know this?"

"I know all, monsieur! I know that you are penniless. I know that you have insinuated yourself into her good graces, and you have drawn from her confessions that do not comport with the dignity and position of the eldest daughter of the Marquis de Brandt! From whom do you descend, monsieur? Have you a name? A fortune? Fame? Anything to warrant you in making proposals of marriage to my daughter? Speak, monsieur! Are you dumb, too?"

Wilford was confounded with the vehement manner of the marquis, and he did not venture a syllable in his defence, at present.

"What have I done, monsieur?" continued the marquis, with apparent deep feeling, "what have I done, that you should thus steel into the bosom of my family, to tear from the embrace and care of affection and affluence, our fairest, but low-level and uneducated child, to reduce to a questionable support, at best, to say nothing of the chances of an adverse maintenance? You want money, monsieur! You need *argent!* Be it so—you shall have gold—since you have had encouragement. I will pay for your disapp-

pointment, but I demand again that you forthwith renounce all claim to my daughter's hand! Yield, then—write!"

"Not for my life, monsieur le marquis!"

"What! See, Wilford—I am rich, powerful, I can make you what you dare not think of becoming, if I withhold my favor. What is your price? I will pay it down, in gold—but you must forget and renounce your plan."

"Monsieur—"

"Wilford! I will give you ten thousand crowns—"

"Not a sou, monsieur le marquis."

"Twenty thousand crowns!" Wilford was silent.

"Fifty thousand, then—here I see my bills of credit, and name your price to retire."

"Monsieur, you rave," responded Wilford, as calmly as possible. "Pray listen to me one moment, since I have heard you speak so long and so patiently."

"Will you renounce my daughter's hand?"

"No, monsieur le marquis! If all the crowns of all this world were yours to give, if each of these would count within itself times the sum of all your splendid fortune, I would—not on my soul! I would not accept it in exchange for one sweet smile from your fair daughter!"

"What, boy!"

"I am penniless, monsieur le marquis. Fortune does not dispense its favors equally, though I do not complain. I am the poor son of a poor but honest father, who taught me to live virtuous and to honor talent, while I spurned the aristocracy which *l'argent* alone created. I have health, ambition, a share of genius in my way, a reputation free from stain of guilt, will be a man, and fortune will not desert me, monsieur, though you may flout at the poor painter."

"And do you speak thus proudly, to me, monsieur?"

"I am beneath your roof, monsieur le marquis, and for the moment, am your guest. I came at your bidding. I love your daughter with all the fervor of youth and with an unconquerable, unchangeable passion. I cannot, will not formally renounce her; I cannot be a villain, monsieur! Yet I will wait, wait your pleasure, or a change in your disposition. She will appreciate this sacrifice on my part, and I shall be certain of her approval of my course. Ask no more, monsieur."

"And you will press your suit no farther?"

"Not without your free consent."

"Enough, Wilford, you disarm me. I will see—I will meet you again. You may retire, now, and see, young man! To-morrow—to-morrow, at ten o'clock, come hither again."

"I will not fail, monsieur," said Wilford, retiring.

Immediately after he had withdrawn, the marquis summoned his daughter to his room. Helen came, pale and pleased with excitement, but calm and pleasant as usual.

"My daughter," said de Brandt, affectionately, "I have conferred with the marchioness in reference to the matter I spoke of to you, yesterday. She will approve the course I have resolved to take. Tell me, is young Wilford the man you would render happy?"

"I should have told you of this before, father, but for your severity, on yesterday. I had no wish to bring down trouble on his head, and since you were so ambitious for my well, I did not name the man I had *promised*, perhaps, to love."

"Is it not young Wilford, daughter?"

"You have named him rightly, father."

"Wilford," continued the marquis, slowly; "Wilford is an honorable young man. I do not find the name in our calendar, but this person is a gentleman of merit. You have seen Wilford before this, have you not?"

"Yes, long since."

"You are content with him?"

"Yes, father; with all my heart."

"And you are satisfied with his fortune?"

"He is rich in all that goes to make the man and gentleman, dear father; and you should know him, surely."

"I do know Wilford; but you did not mention him."

"You did not afford me the opportunity to give his name."

"And this is he of whom we have so long had hints?"

"The same, father."

"Tis well, then, Helen. We accept your choice, but, mark me, for the present do not speak of us, in the matter; I have a plan of my own to carry out, as you may now suspect, and I desire that it may not be frustrated. Preserve your deportment towards him as if nothing had occurred out of the ordinary course of events. I wished to try how strongly you were attached to him, and I have also measured him, since I spoke with you."

"Who, Wilford?"

"Yes, my child. Think you, I would risk my Helen's happiness, without some farther test, in hands unused to guide and cherish innocence and virtue such as she possesses? Think you, after having held the helm so long, I would venture placing it in hands unskilled or reckless, when the rocks and shoals might be in sight?"

"Father! You have been all in all to me! Do as you will. I will still love you more than ever!"

On the following day, at the appointed hour, Wilford made his appearance again at the residence of the marquis. The entire manner of de Brandt was changed towards his guest. He was cheerful and polite, and the artist at once augured a good result to his hopes.

"Wilford," said the marquis, pleasantly, "I have heard a good account of you, since last we met. Did you ever hear of one, Noell, in England, a mariner, I think he was, in the employ of the British government?"

"I knew one Harry Noell, whom I met at Beachy Head, the keeper of the lighthouse, there."

"He had a daughter, did he not?"

"You are right, monsieur. A sweeter girl than Nelly Noell never breathed the ocean air. And brave she was, as well. They saved my life, monsieur, and I should know them, surely!" said Wilford, gratefully.

"You have a portrait of the daughter, in your possession?"

"Yes, monsieur; and it is so like your own Helen, that I have more than once been tempted to present it to the marchioness, had I supposed she would have accepted it."

"I have heard your history of the picture, from a visitor to your studio, and you study months since; what became of this Noell and his child?"

"They perished in the ruins of their humble dwelling, at Beachy Point, which was fired by the hand of malice."

"Ah, yes," I recollect. Wilford, do you still adhere to the position you assumed when I saw you, yesterday?"

"Monsieur le marquis, I can only throw myself upon your lenity. I know, full well, that the charms and the prospective fortune of your daughter are sufficient to command the love and aspirations of many who are high in station, and heavy in purse. Against these, I can only present a whole heart, a clear head, and an honest purpose."

"Which we accept, monsieur!" said the marquis, without further demur.

The heart of Wilford was too full for reply, and de Brandt cut short the interview with a request that he would forget his harshness, and call at his residence often.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### FAMILIAR PAGES.

We must now turn and follow the fortunes of the light-keeper and his daughter, from the time we left them, soon after their arrival in Europe. As we have already seen, Noell had removed the name of the yacht from the stern, and he had subsequently taken all the necessary precautions to destroy any other evidence of the place where she sailed, or who she might belong to. As soon as he made the port where he designed to take her, he found a ready purchaser for her among some smugglers, there, who paid him the full value for the Walf. He then went down to Lisbon, thence to Madrid, and there we left him, with his gold and silver turned into cash and bills of credit to a much larger amount than had ever before been seen. Assuming disguises for himself and child, for the time being, he travelled incognito for a long period, without determining what he should eventually do, or where he should settle.

From time to time, as he watched the journals of the day, he noticed the various accounts given of his supposed death, at the time of the burning of the light-house, and he found this forced hypothesis in regard to the fate of himself and his daughter a very convenient circumstance to favor his future intentions. So he said nothing except to enjoin positive and unconditional secrecy upon his daughter, who had never known any other authority, and who did precisely as she was bidden by her father, without regard to reasons or consequences.

"The captain and his friend must have escaped, as they must," said the parties who applied the torch to the light-house," said Noell, reading the account of the fire to his daughter. "When we left the premises there was no fire in the building, except in the lamps at the cone, and as that portion of the light was wholly composed of glass and iron, it is not probable that it proceeded from that cause in any way. They probably carried off the cage of the marliner, since they had lost their booty, and we may meet the rascals, again, one day or another."

"I hope we may never see them, again, father," said Nelly.

"Well, it may be so. Now, Nelly, I have told you what I have done, and how we are circumstanced. We will make the best of it, and I desire to impress on you the importance, for the present, of our maintaining a strict disguise, and until the whole affair shall have been forgotten, lest unpleasant queries arise that might greatly jeopardize or embarrass me. I assume the responsibility of this act, alone, and you will continue to be guided and protected by me. Ask no unnecessary questions, be prudent constantly, and all will come out right, at last."

With this assurance, and the most general appeal, Noell effectually quieted all apprehensions and doubts in Nelly's mind, and they proceeded to enjoy the means they had so suddenly become possessed of, in a rational but liberal manner.

Fixing upon a permanent incognito, at last, Noell retired to the south of France and established himself, with his daughter, in retired but handsome quarters, where they began to live, once more, upon a scale of ease and splendor that was nowhere rivalled in the vicinity.

There dwelt in the immediate neighborhood, a lady of some substantial pretensions to beauty, who was well known as a most estimable person, in all her relations, who was reported to be very wealthy, and whose style of living evinced that she had a goodly share of the world's goods in her own right. This proved to be correct. She was the widow of a millionaire, who had died some three or four years. Noell met her, and was struck with her ladylike bearing and her apparent good qualities, and he suddenly conceived the idea, as he had been a widower many years, and as he was now in a pecuniary condition to set up such a domestic establishment as he might fancy, that he would take to himself a new wife—provided the lady mentioned should be agreeable to such an arrangement.

Madame did not object to Noell, but, like a business-woman as she was, she made such inquiries into his character as she could, without offence, and became satisfied that he did not seek her fortune alone. His means were found to be ample, and she at length consented to change her name and condition. She married Noell, and the married couple proved a fortunate and happy union, in all respects. Their dispositions were not unlike each other's, they were both largely independent in fortune, and the united wealth of which was an enormous sum, the whole income of which it was impossible for them, reasonably, to expend.

A magnificent chateau was purchased in the interior, and to this place the family retired to

enjoy their splendid income. As Nelly became better acquainted with the usages of society, in the acquisition of the details of which she proved an apt scholar, she was permitted by her father to enjoy herself in her own way, and as best suited her own tastes. Such means were placed at her disposal as she required for a fashionable "pry purse," and she dealt out her means with a liberal hand.

She was especially fond of pictures; and at her father's house she maintained a beautiful gallery of the works of the best ancient and modern artists, which she collected together, from time to time, as the opportunity presented. She often left home, attended by two or three servants, and visited Marseilles, Lyons, or even Paris, when in the mood, in search of gems of art in painting or sculpture.

While at the latter city, on one occasion, she heard the name of Wilford mentioned as an artist from England, and one of great merit. Notwithstanding her father's positive and repeated caution and injunctions as to her conduct when away from his supervision, and although, at that time, it was all-important to Noell to preserve yet, for a while, his incognito, the impetuous daughter resolved upon visiting the studio of Wilford, and to ascertain for herself whether his fame outran his abilities.

Completely and thoroughly disguised, she called there and examined his efforts. Immediately after this, Wilford became acquainted with Marie—whose tender qualities and whose generous sentiments had so deeply interested him, it will be remembered. Then, as the "lady in black" she appeared to him again, at his room, and with her own ears listened to his praises of, and his regrets for the deceased and lovely Nelly Noell! She saw her own portrait there, like a mirror before her, and which she would have purchased, at any price, but the artist would not part with it. Ah, how this flattered the veiled but lovely daughter of his benefactor. And time passed on.

While Wilford sincerely thought that the ashes of the departed Nelly reposed beneath the scared and fallen ruins of the light-house, this same Nelly was flitting to and fro between her home and his studio—watching over him, directly and indirectly, in acquiring fame and fortune. To her sight of hand was he indebted for the mysterious note found in his sketch-book; the first he received from the subsequently known Marie. He never suspected her, however. To her influence he owed much of the success which attended his labors, too—for the lost opportunity of sending friends to him, when he most needed their patronage. Nevertheless, her plans were so adroitly managed that he was entirely ignorant of her existence, or her agency in the matter, and he lived on, ably and unconsciously of her secret devotion to him!

But, while he was in the midst of his labors in Paris, there arrived in the metropolis a meteor of rare brilliancy in the world of fashion. The praises of the new-comer were loud upon every lip, the fame of their extraordinary wealth and sumptuous mode of living spread in all directions, and Wilford found himself among the guests invited to various or given openings, and soirées.

The still humble but aspiring artist had little taste for this sort of entertainment, for it was not only by far too expensive a medium of enjoyment for his purse, but he felt that the sphere for the present, was above him; and he would have avoided mixing in such company, but for the unexpected and timely arrival of his friend Manfred from England.

He responded to the invitation he had received, however, when he learned that his companion was to be present, and here he met with the only woman whom he had ever seriously thought of loving. In Helen de Brandt—the daughter of the now famous marquis, he saw a being such as he had pictured that Nelly who was lost to him; and he was vanquished, at sight of her singular resemblance to his ideal darling.

We have already learned how he followed up this attraction, and how he was received by the daughter of the illustrious marquis; and this brings us again to the continuation of our story, and the development of our plot.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### APPROPRIATE DISCLOSURES.

Tins de Brandt had returned to their estate on the Gironde. During their residence here, for a twelvemonth or more, they had been known by the title they had chosen when they came from the south, as the reader has already seen, this name was of course fictitious. It will have also been discovered that the widowed "marquis," who had been so fortunate as to fall into a gold mine so suddenly, and who subsequently became united in marriage to the charming and wealthy Widow Dessart, was only a marquis for the time being, for his own purposes; and that was in fact, none other than our long-missing and widely acquainted, Harry Noell, the lighthouse light-keeper.

Hortense was the daughter of Madame Dessart, and Helen was our identical "Nelly," a pet cockenon corrupted by family usage for her real name. All this, as yet, was entirely unknown, however, except to the parties directly spoken of; neither Manfred nor Wilford entertained the slightest suspicion of the fact, and such had been the management of the so-called de Brandts (which was the family name of Madame Dessart, prior to her first marriage), that the deception had proved entirely successful, from the beginning.

From the very outset of her new career, in deed, from the hour when Wilford finally parted with Noell and his daughter, at the light, the father of Nelly had resolved—if they lived long enough—to bring about a union between the artist and his child. He learned the disposition of Nelly towards Wilford, and he felt, as soon as he became possessed of sufficient means, to carry out his intentions at his leisure, that there would be no difficulty in consummating the happiness of two hearts that he was certain would affiliate, if the proper direction were given to his design.

All the circumstances that subsequently occurred, favored his plan. He knew that the public believed him dead. He took care to ascertain that the artist had adopted this belief, and his management aided to confirm this supposition, in his mind. He saw that it was then only necessary to adopt a plausible incognito, and to preserve it, a while, until he was able to carry his scheme to a successful termination.

He suffered his naturally heavy beard and profuse hair to grow unshorn. He adopted an entirely different style of dress, and habit of speech. His manner became thoroughly changed, from the affable and easy ways of a seemingly careless and inferior being, to the austere and stiff address of a harsh and aristocratic military man, apparently. In his newly-assumed costume he appeared much taller in stature, than usual; and his generous style of living had the effect of rendering him corpulent, and much stouter in person than before. His whole mien was changed, and the fact that Noell had been dead several months (in Wilford's opinion and belief), had the effect of warding off all suspicion as to his identity with any one he had ever known before.

In addition to all this, it will be recollected that during the time that Wilford was domiciled at the light-keeper's dwelling, he had been, up to the last very few days, entirely unconscious of anything in life. When he came to consciousness, finally, he found himself in a small, darkened room, of the wealthy and gentle girl, and subsequently saw the form of a man about his bedside. He had never had the opportunity to examine Noell's lineaments, particularly, and really never knew his face and features very accurately, for, as soon as he was able to look at the daylight, Manfred took him away to better quarters. Thus it was not strange he had been completely deceived as to the identity of the wealthy and stately Marquis de Brandt, surrounded by his new wife and family and retinue, with the person of the poor widowed light-keeper of Beachy Head, whom, above all, he supposed in his heart had gone to his long and final home.

So with Helen. The moment Wilford fixed his eyes upon the eldest daughter of the nominal "marquis," at his levee in Paris, it will be remembered that she, and Nelly Noell could be the same individual. Besides this, the circumstances that surrounded her, would alone have destroyed or annihilated this belief. She was but one of two or three of the children of the marquis, who was a married man of immense wealth. Noell was a poor lone widower, with but a single child—as Wilford knew him—and all these things served to aid in completing the deceit.

As we have said, the family of the Brandts had returned to their princely residence at La Realle, where, very soon after their arrival from Italy, they commenced making arrangements for quitting that portion of the world, having decided, thenceforward, to re-assume their proper name, and to pass the remainder of their life in England. The family mansion and its appointments were really disposed of. The country was sold, and as Noell's funds were largely invested in stocks and government securities, there was little delay in his breaking up, and final removal from the chateau.

Among other preparations, the former light-keeper, now no longer the "marquis," had previously ordered the building of a beautiful yacht, which was furnished after the exact model of the Walf, and which was in readiness for launching when he quit La Realle. He had preserved drawings and the dimensions of his first vessel, from keel to truck, and the model was the same; indeed, when he called to examine her, at last, before taking possession of her, he could not point out a single particle of change that he would have made, either in her hull, her rig, her color, or her furnishings, so perfectly had his memory and his drawings served him, and so faithfully had her builder finished and equipped her. She was christened the Walf, without hesitation, and Nelly, when she came to see her, declared that she could not find a fault with the imitation, in any particular.

Wilford had reached Paris again, after his brief absence at Venice and the south, where orders were awaiting him, in abundance. Manfred had gone to England, once more, and it was clear, from his deportment, that he was perfectly well satisfied with the result of his trip on the Continent. He had been formally accepted by Hortense, and he would be united to her in marriage as soon as the requisite preliminaries could be arranged, at home. His father interposed no objection to the union of his son with the daughter of a live marquis, and preparations were forthwith put in train to consummate this event.

In the meantime, neither Manfred nor Wilford knew anything about the real name and character of the "de Brandts," except what they had seen, and what they had been permitted to learn in regard to them, abroad. The fruit was not yet ripe enough to pluck, in the opinion of Noell, and he was not quickened by the discovery of his long-planned and thus far shrewdly-wrought scheme.

But the hour was approaching when the curtain must be withdrawn, and when the parties must see and know each other, precisely as they were in reality. Wilford kept himself busily employed in his studio, however; for his patrons had increased, and he now had several pictures under way, that had been bespoken for months.

He had not heard a word from "Marie" since his interview with her at the hotel in Venice, when she so frankly avowed herself to him, and offered him her hand and fortune. He did not much expect to hear anything further from that source, under the circumstances, and he set the affair down as a Parisian adventure that he

should not forget, but to which he attached no particular importance. But Marie had not yet done with Alfred Wilford! She was a fearless intrepid woman, who, once resolved upon any measure, heeded no impediments, suffered no adverse circumstance to deter her from carrying her final purpose to issue. So she had planned in this *affaire de cœur*, and she followed up her enterprise with a determination and spirit worthy of all praise.

Wilford was engaged as usual in his studio, and had almost forgotten how beautifully the "beggar" had appeared to him, when he was suddenly aroused from his labors by the sound of a voice he could not mistake.

"Don't you, monsieur!" said the "lady in black," entering his room quietly, and approaching the easel where he was engaged.

Wilford turned quickly about, and beheld the veiled figure of his generous patron, the purchaser of his Madonna. He did not feel at ease, and was sorry she had called. But he was compelled to be civil to his strange and eccentric customer, who had taken so deep an interest in his welfare.

"Madame," he said, "I feared, after our last interview, that you would scarcely honor me with another call."

"Am I not welcome, Wilford?"

"Madame! How can you be otherwise? You who have done me such solid service, and who have evinced so lively an interest in my affairs?"

"Then you do not say you did not desire to meet me again, monsieur?"

"I did not say so, madame, surely. But, to what—what particular circumstance am I now indebted for your present visit, if I may venture to ask?"

"My business will be briefly told. I have learned that you have been successful in your suit, Wilford. I hear that you have been accepted—your proposal to Helen de Brandt has been approved, I mean. Is the report correct?"

"In all candor, lady, I really think you should hardly press me for an answer to so delicate a question," said Wilford, cautiously.

"Still, if I urge it, will you not answer yes or no?"

"Will you give your reasons for this query?"

"Curiosity, if you please—or any other cause."

"That would be insufficient. Yet I will not deny your appeal. I have reason to hope that my suit is, happily, progressing favorably."

"So I feared. Wilford, it is not too late. I have already for fear forgotten the dignity and character of my sex as to open my heart to you, and propose a hand untainted, with a splendid fortune, for your acceptance. In your own country this would have seemed monstrous—but in France, it is not so peculiar or unnatural. You have declined the proposal, made in all confidence and honor, and you have shown me that you do not appreciate the offer."

"Madame, I am a thousand times grateful to you, for substantial evidence of your disposition towards me; but I have no heart to give you in exchange, and you surely could not seek a hand without a heart!" continued Wilford, seriously.

"No, Wilford, no! You are right, and I have erred. Could it have been possible for me to have served you further than it has already been my pleasure to do, I would gladly have done so. If I can now aid you, in any way, command me without hesitation."

"Madame, the kindness of yourself and other friends has placed me entirely above and beyond any necessity for further pecuniary aid. My pictures have commanded such prices that I have been able to live agreeably with my wishes, and I have already realized a sum that will place me beyond the reach of want, under any ordinary circumstances. I thank you for your kindness, and trust that you will continue to be my friend."

"Be happy, then. You do not know me, you have not seen my face, when I have communicated with you, and you lose nothing in fancy by your determination to reject me. Adieu! monsieur. May you be happier with your chosen Helen, than you could have been with Marie."

The speaker left, without another word; and Wilford felt greatly relieved as he heard the door close behind her.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE DUPLICATED YACHT.

When the Walf was finally ready for sea, she was sent up the coast, in charge of a skilled skipper employed by Noell, and arrived in safety off the mouth of the Seine. A more beautiful little craft had never been seen in French waters. She was jauntily dressed and her furniture and fittings were very elegant and substantial. Upon her stern in a gilded scroll appeared her name, like the original, and she was in all respects similar in size, tonnage, color and appearance.

Manfred had been over to England some weeks, but only temporarily; and was now returning to Paris, where he had engaged to meet the "marquis" and his family, who had recently arrived there. The friends were in high glee, at the prospect before them, for they felt satisfied that everything was now pretty well settled as regarded their future hopes with the de Brandts. As yet, they were entirely ignorant of what was in store for them, however!

"I am glad to see you, Manfred," said his friend, as soon as the latter called upon him. "How have you been, and how does your father's family?"

"Well, all well, Wilford. Do you know, my boy, that I made a discovery, half an hour since?"

"No. What now?"

"You remember the pretty little yacht I presented to your friend Noell, at Beachy Head?"

"Yes, to be sure, and a beauty she was, too."

"What became of her?"

"I don't know, except that report gave out, at the time the premises of Noell were burned, that she had been spirited away by some one, and it was supposed that the two swindlers who



did the mischief there, were the paroliers, after they had applied the match. That is all I ever heard about her. Why?"

"She lies in the stream, off the river's mouth."

"What?"

"It is true. I have seen her, to-day."

"You mean that you have seen something that resembles her, I presume," said Wilford.

"I mean just what I say, miloby," insisted Manfred.

"I saw the Wolf, my yacht that was, which I fitted up and sent down to Neill at the beach, two years ago, and more."

"Well, what did you do?"

"Do? About what?"

"Why, what course did you take, when you discovered her?"

"Dug east, miloby, as near as I can calculate the sun from the quay to your studio! At any rate, I came straight here, and I think the Wolf now lies off there, a mile or so to the westward."

"A truce to your nautical skill, Manfred, and tell me if you did not institute proceedings, in some way, to seize her?"

"To seize her! What kind of a piratical disposition do you imagine I possess? What should I seize her for?"

"For, man! Why—if the two men ran away with her, that is, I mean, if they carried her off, or sailed her, or whatever you term it, wouldn't it be easy to catch the scoundrels, and bring them to punishment for their misdeeds?"

"Why, miloby, do you suppose for one moment that if those men took possession of her and put away from the beach in her, with the design of profiting by the movement, they would have kept her long? Do you imagine they would dare to make their appearance here, in such close contiguity to the scene of their robbery, in the vessel they had stolen? Of course not. They probably sold the Wolf at the first opportunity; and the present owner thus comes honestly enough possessed of her. At any rate I do not feel disposed to question his right to her."

"Yes, but who is the owner? There could be no harm in asking the question."

"That is quite another thing, miloby. I did ask who owned her, and received for answer that it was not known who he was, only that he was a gentleman of fashion and fortune who had lately arrived at Paris, with his family."

"And you are certain it is the Wolf?"

"As sure as I am that you are Wilford, or that you ever saw the 'lady in sables,' miloby," said Manfred, jocosely.

"That reminds me, Manfred, of another meeting I have lately had with this incomprehensible being."

"Where?"

"Here, in Paris."

"Possible? She follows you, then, like a brother?"

"I had tried to forget her, and hoped she would not annoy me. And yet," he continued, "she is exceedingly kind in speech, and appears to be very submissive and resigned to her disappointment."

"Is she pretty?"

"There you are ahead of me, again. I have never seen her face."

"Never—and have had half a dozen interviews with her?"

"No. She has always been deeply veiled, except at Venice, and then she had an entire domino, covering her face, completely."

"This is romance, to be sure. What did she say, this time? I thought she would not see you again?"

"She sought nothing new, I think. She was pleasant and talkative, as usual, and retired. But she is a singular being."

"Yes; and you will do well to be rid of her. Had I been in your situation, I would have seen her face, at any rate."

"How would you have done this?"

"Insisted upon her gratifying me, after so long a questionable acquaintance."

"And if she still refused?"

"I would have removed her domino, by force, if necessary."

"That would have been rude, Manfred."

"I would have seen her face, I tell you, miloby."

"And so will I," said Wilford, valiantly, "if ever I meet with her, alone, again!"

"He kept his word, too."

"But, Manfred," he continued, "I want to have a look at the yacht. Come, let us take a cab and go down." And the friends were soon at the Quai d'Orleans, below which lay the Wolf in the stream.

"How does she look, miloby?"

"As natural as life, Manfred, upon my word," exclaimed Wilford. "Ah, my little lady," he continued, addressing himself to the boat, "you and I ought to be acquainted, to be sure. We've been just friends, together, if I remember right?"

"So closely related on one occasion, at least," said Manfred, good-humoredly, "that you couldn't throw her off your side so readily as you manage to get rid of your other friend, the 'lady in black,' eh?"

"Manfred," said Wilford, resolutely, "I am determined to know who owns this yacht, now."

"Proceed, miloby—proceed. And if you ascertain, just make a note out of my benefit."

"Who's that?" said Wilford, pointing to a coarsely-dressed man, who was just leaving the quay in a small boat.

"Glad, Wilford, I can't say, never having seen the gentleman before, to your knowledge."

"Well. Do you perceive anything the matter with my eyes?"

"Nothing, except that from your expression, I should say you had discovered a very large-sized mare's nest, on a sudden."

"Well, if that isn't Harry Noel yonder, I never saw him!"

"Who?"

"Noel, the light-keeper."

"Ha, ha! Come, miloby, we had better return. You are getting excited. Every pretty woman you meet is a Nelly, and every man you see in a blouse is Harry Noel! Look sharp, that you don't play at this sort of hide-and-seek in Helen's presence. Come!"

"No. I will satisfy myself who that man is at all events."

The man in the gray blouse was taken straight

to the yacht. The forecastle was immediately

flung out, and the Wolf proceeded away from the river.

Wilford was ready to swear, almost, that he had seen Harry Noel, that day. But his friend laughed the idea out of him, and they returned from the quay as wise as they came.

Notwithstanding the loss of Manfred, it was Harry Noel they had thus met with. He saw the young man examining the yacht, and calling to a waterman jumped into his boat and was put aboard the Wolf. He immediately ordered the skipper to fall down the river a mile or two, for the purpose of getting away from further present observation. He returned to his lodgings at evening, enjoying the sensation he thought he had caused, in the highest degree. This, too, was a part of his as yet unfinished scheme, to be completed, anon.

On the succeeding evening, just as Wilford had prepared to visit the "marquis" and his family, his servant brought him the following note, which he had been left at the door a moment previously.

"A friend of Mr. Wilford's, who has just arrived in town, would be glad to have him call immediately at his hotel, *Leon d'Or*, on an especial business. His friend will leave Paris shortly, and will detain him but a few minutes."

"Nine, P. M. Room 56."

As it was still quite early—for Paris hours—Wilford pocketed the note, and ordered his carriage at once to the *Hôtel du Lion d'Or*.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

THE TRIPLE APPOINT.

As a retired but beautifully furnished apartment of the hotel mentioned, there sat a lady whose age was uncertain because her face could not be seen. She had recently arrived in Paris, and was but little acquainted there, it was thought.

The room she now occupied was contiguous to a similar apartment that opened into this, and both were similarly appointed. The connecting door stood open, and the light could be seen from either. She half reclined upon a small sofa or divan which stood aside near this door, and her form indicated her to be a lady not over five-and-twenty—perhaps younger. She wore a masque that completely hid her features from view, and she seemed to be anxiously awaiting some one's arrival—when the outer door opened and the attendant announced:

"Monsieur Wilford."

"Show him in, Louis," said the lady, at once.

And our young artist stepped into the room. He had rather expected this—at the last moment before he reached the hotel, but it was too late for him to recede with decency. As he anticipated, he discovered in the person who now had "special business" with him, the masked figure of the "lady in sables."

"You come relatively, Wilford," she said, in a sort of melancholy tone. "I see you are not pleased. I regret this, for the present meeting will be our last one, I presume."

"That will be entirely as you elect, madame," replied Wilford. "I did not think it was your summons that called me here, to-night, when I received your note; but I am here, and will take your commands with pleasure, since we are now mutually aware of the relations we bear to each other."

"You have resolved, Alfred Wilford, to wed the daughter of a man whom you suppose to be noble," continued the lady, with emphasis.

"I am affianced to the Lady Helen de Brandt, madame," responded Wilford, proudly.

"I know it, monsieur. She is the daughter of the Marquis de Brandt."

"You are right."

"You are sure she is the daughter of a marquis, Wilford?"

"Yes—yes, madame."

"Then you are very easily cajoled, my young friend."

"Cajoled?"

"Yes, that is the word I used."

"And how, pray?"

"The father of Helen is no marquis at all, Wilford. His name is an assumed one—that is all," continued the masque, coolly.

"This is monstrous, madame! What can be your object, in thus attempting to tantalize me, I cannot tell. But—"

"—ah—Alfred Wilford! Listen to what I have to say, for your own good," added the "lady in sables."

"Not a marquis!" muttered the painter.

"You are noble, Wilford. Noble in heart, noble in person, noble in purpose, noble in genius, noble in talent, and noble—natural nobleman, fashioned by his hand who alone can create nobility. I am no prophetess, no seer, Wilford! I repeat it, the father of Helen is not a marquis, or the descendant of a marquis."

"Do you know this,—or do you only surmise?"

"I suspect nothing, monsieur. On my honor, as a lady and a Christian, as your friend and well-wisher, I assure you I know of what I speak!"

"He is wealthy—honorable—is he not?"

"He is. But you have been deceived, I say. Will you timely submit to this?"

"I really, really am greatly obliged."

"Pshaw! It is too late for compliments, Wilford. Let us talk like reasonable beings, who appreciate each other. Tell me, Wilford," she continued, "had the poor beggar-girl of the Pont des Fleurs possessed all the charms of this beautiful Helen (as you deem her), could you have stooped to her condition, and taken her to your arms, though she loved you as few women ever learn to love? If Marie, whose face you could not see, were even quite as pleasant to look upon; if Marie had devoted her life to you, and would have died to serve you, could you have smitten her from her gracefully lying in the poor light-keeper's child, who watched at your fevered bedside, and wiped away the sweat drops as they oozed from your aching brow; if poor Noel's darling daughter still existed, and should own her love for you; still would you turn to the child of this false marquis, and claim his Helen as your bride?"

"You speak at random, lady. Noel has gone to his last home—"

"And if he lived?"

"Ah! If he lived, and if his Nelly lived, I should not now be here, perhaps."

"But if she lived, if Nelly still were living, you would not discard the daughter of the marquis, surely, Wilford?" said the lady, bitterly.

"O, this is useless rant, madame. I cannot say what I might do if miracles can be performed in Paris."

"Ah, Wilford, there are stranger things in heaven and earth than what may be dreamed in your philosophy! Noel still lives, monsieur!"

At the utterance of these last words, which the lady delivered in a measured and prophetic tone, young Wilford sprang to his feet, and nearly fainted from the shock they occasioned him.

"Not dead! I am certain of this, too?"

"As sure as I am that I now speak to the living Wilford."

"And—Nelly—Nelly!" almost screamed the youth, in his terrible excitement, "Nelly isn't dead, either?"

"Noel's daughter lives, monsieur!" said the woman, promptly.

Alfred Wilford gasped, and fell heavily to the floor.

"Quick!" cried the afflicted masque, to her attendant at the door; "some water, wine—quick, Louis!"

The servant instantly brought restoratives, raised the artist up, and saw the indications of returning consciousness as his mistress re-entered the apartment, and waived him to retire. When Wilford came to himself again, he found the sables was gone; and in her place at his side, with soothing and gentle words, there stood the poor beggar-girl of the Pont des Fleurs.

"I hope that monsieur is better," she said, in a sweet and gentle accent. "Marie is always near you, Wilford, when you are in trouble."

The painter looked up, passed his hand over his eyes, and saw before him the figure of the poor girl who had befriended on the bridge, at midnight. Then recovering his speech, he cried out:

"Where do you come?"

"Marie is near you," she said. "Do not be alarmed."

He gazed at her a moment, as if recovering from some dream or daze; there was the same dress, the miserable cloak and hood, the form, the voice, the accent, the plaintive sound he had once heard before, and never had forgotten; and he was wild in his excitement.

"Who are you, woman?" he muttered.

"Marie—your friend."

"Where is she? What has become of her?"

"Your patron? She has gone. Be calm—you will see her no more. She did wrong to leave you thus. She will not return."

"Let me see her. I will see her!" he continued, starting up fiercely. "Bring her back! What means this cursed jugglery and imposition? Where am I? Are you not Marie?"

"Yes, monsieur—your constant friend."

"Are you not she? The beggar, Marie, and the woman who—"

"Remember! Take off the mask; remove this ghastly cloak!" continued Wilford, furiously, as he seized the beggar's arm, and wrested the hood from her face. "I will see your face, at cost of life!"

The cloak and bonnet fell upon the carpet, and there, before his astounded gaze, with all her graces innocent and beauty, in her simple attire, stood Nelly—Noel's child!

This was too much for the nerves of Alfred Wilford; he looked into one, reeled forward, and fell headlong into the arms of the lady's attendant, who at that moment sprang to his mistress's side.

"Raise him upon the sofa, Louis; it is only temporary faintness; he will quickly recover. Here, place this to his mouth; there—ah!—that will do. Be prudent, Louis; silent! Composure now!"

The servant nodded, and Nelly disappeared. A moment afterwards, Wilford was taken quietly to his carriage, which was in waiting at the door, and attended by Louis, he was at once conveyed to his lodgings, and safely bestowed for the night.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER.

BY MRS. E. WELLINGTON.

"Was that charming looking girl that is dancing with Lieutenant Mowbray?" inquired Hal of his friend Caswell, who was at that moment intently eyeing her through an eye-glass as she glided so gracefully down the merry collium, while her partner seemed perfectly on tiptoe with delight as he bore the fair creature upon his arm to the upper drawing room.

"At any rate," replied Caswell, "the lieutenant is completely 'smashed,' as we should say in vulgar phraseology. Did you see how intently he looked into her eyes, and how obsequiously he bowed an assent to her proposals? There's no chance for us, Hal; the beautiful Juliette is undoubtedly lost now—the heiress will soon be pledged to that fellow."

"Pray tell me, Caswell, who is Juliette Morris? I've heard there's a history attached to her which reads rather romantically. Do tell me if you know anything of it?"

"I merely know that she is the adopted daughter of General Morris. Report says that some years ago, the general had a graceful and accomplished daughter, who was smitten by a severe malady and died very suddenly; that the general and his lady grew remorseful under their bereavement, and resolved to console their grief by the adoption of a child from some orphanage. But that the following year they were induced to take a journey in their own carriage, to try the effect of new scenery upon their disquieted hearts; that a little playful schoolgirl was frolicking in front of the hotel where they stopped, who bore a striking resemblance to their daughter; that she too had a singularly beautiful face, and a sunny heart, just like their own Juliette; that they summoned the little blushing girl to their apartment and

prevailed on her to take a seat in their carriage to show them the spot where she lived; that it proved to be the humble residence of a hard-working farmer, whose wife was busily plying the little wheel, spinning flax to make her Julia a homespun dress; that there were but two children, Janet and Julia, the brother being some years the senior of his sister."

"How the strange proposition was made to adopt this only and deeply loved daughter by General Morris, what promises were pledged, and what inducements held forth that it lay in their power to transform the rustic Julia into a dainty little toy, to clothe her in silk and educate her in a palace, and eventually to marry her to a nobleman and bequeath heaps of dollars to her as a dowry; how the old farmer could have his mortgages paid off, and his little red house repainted and newly shingled. I say, how far such intimations went to reconcile the couple to part with their daughter, we may infer from the result rather than any positive statement transmitted to us; for after considering General Morris's proposal for the space of three months, they agreed to it, and Julia assumed the sobriquet of Juliette, laid aside her rustic garb and went to reside in the palace."

"The child was at first delighted with the change; but by-and-by the inmates of the little red house used to appear to her in dreams, and these re-awakened sentiments of filial affection were always greatly increased by the reception of occasional letters from her mother and sister, describing the new aspects of the cottage, and the probability that before they should meet she would have a new sister-in-law to love; for Jared thought of attempting to make good his sister's loss."

"But Juliette did not always promptly reply to these letters. Mrs. Morris had a shade of jealousy about her motherhood, and endeavored by every possible stratagem to direct her darling from dwelling upon the picture of her childhood's home. Still, some outbursts of natural affection would manifest themselves, and when a letter came saying 'that her father had died and Jared was married, and her mother yearned to see her own daughter,' Juliette grew wild with anguish, and would weep in defiance of being thought silly by her foster-parents."

But Juliette had a tasteless little room which she called her own—she often sat there and meditated. She felt she was under great obligations to her rich parents, but then she felt there was a vacuum, a sentiment, a sort of undefinable want which another object might fill. She was at this very time mentally asking herself, "what does the lieutenant think of me?" for budding womanhood at sixteen cannot stand the glances of adoration without returning similar ones where a mutual interest is kindled. Again she sat abstracted, and thought followed thought so rapidly, Juliette was not at all impressed with the flight of time. "If he does not think of me more than others," was her mental cogitation, "why did he look so impudently in my face and press me so closely?"

And she was thus ruminating, a summons came for Juliette to answer to the inquiry of a stranger who desired to see her. It was her mother; and she called her child and cautioned her, and pressed her tenderly to her heart, and wept just as lady mothers would weep in drawing rooms; and Juliette started back from her embrace, for the bell rang and Lieutenant Mowbray had called, and as he passed the stranger in the hall he saw the features bore a strong resemblance to Juliette's, and suddenly there flashed into his mind that he had seen the mother of the lovely girl, and then he remembered a strange mystery hung about her history; but he saw his lovely idol turn repulsively away, and a feeling of shame suffused her cheeks, lest she should catch the fact and turn from her forever; and to shut out her mother was not so dreadful to her as to lose an interview with her lover!

Lieutenant Mowbray did not then offer him. He felt that as she had been so true to him, much as he adored the fair face, he wanted a sincere heart. His fears were awakened lest vanity and foolish fashion had gained a lodgment in Juliette's breast. His interview was tender and affectionate; but it was not all the fair girl craved to meet her lover. That was an enigma to her. Surely she knew he did not recognize the scene in the hall, nor spy the features of her mother in the face of Juliette. He felt that, much as he adored the fair face, he wanted a sincere heart. His fears were awakened lest vanity and foolish fashion had gained a lodgment in Juliette's breast. His interview was tender and affectionate; but it was not all the fair girl craved to meet her lover. That was an enigma to her. Surely she knew he did not recognize the scene in the hall, nor spy the features of her mother in the face of Juliette. He felt that, much as he adored the fair face, he wanted a sincere heart. 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(Written for The Flag of our Union.)

## FATHER'S SYMPATHIES.

BY W. N. LAWRENCE.

The sympathies of Faith  
Harmoniously flow  
Around the inward, secret pulse,  
Of human hearts below.  
Extremes songs arise!  
Sensible, sweet and free;  
And float through ether infinite,  
Rhythm's vast sea.

Restless joy pervades—  
Rhythm in its power—  
That soul whose faithful sympathies  
O'erleap the fleeting hour.  
Whose solemn pulses float  
Above the cloud and shade,  
Till brighter, purer, later yet,  
Their onward guide is made.

Faith's spirit o'er earth's  
Material prison walls,  
Holds away with warmer, deeper love,  
Than round the skeptic falls.  
The cloud-land opens to view,  
Inspired in rosy light,  
Dispellet e'en the darkest shades  
Of immaterial night.

(Written for The Flag of our Union.)

## THE LADY IN THE OMNIBUS.

BY MRS. N. T. MUNROE.

ACT first, scene first of this little drama—a street in a pleasant suburban town; time—a dark, stormy evening; the hour—between nine and ten; *dramatis personae*—a merry party of about a dozen persons, consisting of both ladies and gentlemen, who have just left the house of a friend, and are crossing the village square. A drizzling rain is falling, but judging by the merry voices and shouts of laughter, it does not dampen the spirits of the party.

By the aid of lanterns carried by some of the party, they have just succeeded in crossing the muddy street, when the roll of an omnibus is heard in the distance.

"There, Mr. Tremor," says one of the party, "you can ride to the city, it will save you a long muddy walk."

"Is that omnibus going directly to the city?" inquired the person indicated, the only one of the party whose home did not lie within a stone's throw.

"Yes, directly in," is the reply; "and very fortunate for you, as you will not accept any of our invitations to pass the night."

"I should be very happy to do so, but business forbids."

"The omnibus is still at some little distance, but its lights are plainly visible."

"We will stop the coach for you," says one, going into the middle of the street, swinging his lantern over his head, then setting it down on the ground, as if a railroad train were expected instead of a peaceful suburban omnibus. Another, a tall, stout man, stands out in the middle of the street, holding his lantern over his head as arm's length, while the rest of the party stand on the sidewalk, almost convulsed with laughter at the merry jokes passing from one to the other, and all this parade to stop the coach for one passenger.

"The omnibus comes nearer and nearer; the driver, by the aid of the lanterns, sees a number of dark figures on the sidewalk, and is already counting them up at ten cents a head. He comes nearer; he stops."

"How many will your omnibus carry?" says one.

"As many as can get in," was the safe and true reply.

One of the gentlemen with a lantern then escorts the only person who is to patronize the coach that night, and leading him very carefully to the steps, calls to the driver:

"Driver," says he, "this is an exceedingly lonesome man. I hope you will be very careful of him, and leave him safe in his door."

He thrust his friend in the driver closed the door, looked at the merry party still standing on the sidewalk, betraying not the most distant intention of crowding his vehicle that night, and half amused and half provoked, drives on.

The party, with merry jokes and laugh, pass on to their homes, and Mr. Tremor rolls on to the city in the coach which he had been so curiously ushered, his only companion a female, closely wrapped in a blanket shawl. Here we will leave them while we introduce our readers to Mr. Tremor.

He was a young man of talent and genius; a good thinker, a good talker, and an agreeable companion, for on no subject, literature, science or politics, was he ever known to be at fault. Among the associates with whom he had just parted, and with whom it was his pleasure to meet once a week during the winter months, he was beloved and respected.

There was one thing which he gloried in, but for which his associates never ceased to give him their unfeigned and deepest pity, though he always assured them it was wholly unalloyed. He was a bachelor. He made it his boast that he could go where he pleased, and where he pleased. If he stayed out late at night, there was no one to reproach him when he came home. If he chose to sit up at night to read or write, no little responsibility annoyed him with its midnight cries. If he chose to travel, he had but to take his valise in his hand, go to the depot, and away at half an hour's notice. He had no trouble with trunks, rattling a suburban villa in size, and surrounded by a body guard of handboxes. No one had claims upon his purse for silk dresses, lovers of bonnets, frocks for little Fanny, or caps for Charlie; he was never called upon for a new carpet for the parlor, because the old one was getting decidedly shabby, and Mrs. F. had said she was near the door. He could afford it as well as Mr. F. And more than all, he never was asked when he went away in the morning, to step into the provision store, and send home a joint of meat, a bunch of turnips, a cabbage, or a string of onions; he never was annoyed by being told that the flour was all out,

and there was not a potato in the house. O, no, he had none of these troubles, he was fully sensible of his blessings; he knew he was a happy man.

True, his associates pretended to pity him, but he could see through it all—it was sheer envy. They told him of the pleasures of having some one to share their joys and sorrows; they would not give a cent to travel without their better halves; if they saw a fine landscape, they wished for some one to enjoy it with them; and the annoyances of travel, if shared by wife, were lightened of half their terror; as to the trunks and handboxes, such things must be expected, the dear creatures could not be expected to go without their finery, and, indeed, they did not wish them to do it; they liked to see them look pretty and genteel, and were willing to pay the penalty.

But he insisted that a male companion was just as good, if you wanted one to share in the enjoyment of the beauties of nature, and they were a vast deal less trouble, for they would take care of themselves. Of course, he had the best of the argument. But sometimes when he left the pleasant homes of his friends, where they seemed so happy in each other's love and affection, for his long walk or ride to the city, and then went to his lonely room at his boarding-house, it may be he had suggested the contrast; but if so, it was never known, or he was well satisfied; he was a highly-favored man.

But yet his state of single blessedness did by no means free him from care; pretending to be so free to come and go, no house to look after, no family to call upon him, no children to worry him, to disturb his nights and fret his days; yet his time was more taken up than that of any married man of his acquaintance. So beset was he with business, he never could get to bed at proper hours; he had little time for recreation, for business hurried him from day to day, from week to week. His friends had long evenings at home, nothing to do but lounge on the sofa, read their wives, or play with the children; but he was always busy; his bachelorship secured him not from care and the pressure of business.

Yet it must not be owned that his friend had erred when he had spoken of him as a lonesome man; he was never lonesome, a mind well cultivated and fond of books need never be lonely, and Mr. Tremor, though a bachelor, was not what might be called a lonesome man. But we have left him long time in the omnibus with his female companion.

The lady, somewhat alarmed by the noise which had preceded his entrance, had withdrawn herself to the farthest part of the coach. Mr. Tremor thought he would speak to her, and let her know that he was not so very formidable a person, though his advent into the coach had been accompanied with much noise and bustle.

After seating himself, he looked towards the corner where she was seated, and said in his blandest tones:

"It is a very stormy evening, madam."

This of course was no news, but it served to break the ice. She replied in the affirmative, and then there was silence. He noticed in the few words she had spoken that her voice was soft and musical; he thought he would like to hear it again. He thought a moment.

"I was not aware," said he, "that a coach left for the city at this hour."

"It has run at this hour every evening," she replied, "for about a month."

"And will continue to do so through the winter?"

"I presume so," she replied.

"It will be a great accommodation to me," said Mr. Tremor.

There was another pause. There was a light in the coach; the lady had withdrawn her veil, which on her entrance was thrown over her face. Mr. Tremor had now a good view of her features. It was a pretty, interesting face; but he was not at all struck by it. She wore a thick blanket shawl closely wrapped around her person, a straw bonnet with a blue ribbon upon it; nothing peculiar in her dress, certainly. True, there was a grace in her figure in the very position in which she sat in the coach, which he could not help noticing; but then he had seen figures as graceful before. Her voice, he must own, was soft and musical, but then he had heard a hundred others as much so; but yet he liked her note it notwithstanding. She seemed rather unwilling to be drawn into conversation, which was however but natural, as he was a stranger.

Their ride was at an end; the coach drew up before the office door. Mr. Tremor alighted, and very politely assisted his companion to do the same. The street was very muddy; she was in a manner obliged to take the hand he offered for her assistance, and he could not help noticing that hers was small and beautifully shaped. He was, it must be owned, very observant of a bachelor; but where was the young lady going at this hour? thought Mr. Tremor.

While he was thus thinking, a boy of about thirteen, who had evidently been waiting for the coach, walked off with the lady in question, and he was left alone in the street.

A week passed, during which Mr. Tremor, spite of his age, often thought of the lady in the omnibus. A week, and the evening that he was to meet with his friends again arrived. He thought he would take the coach out, though being a man of business habits, he generally preferred the cab; but the coach would carry him nearest the place of destination, and if the thought did cross his mind that perhaps she might be in it, of course it had nothing to do with his decision. But she was not there. He passed a pleasant evening with his friends, and at the same hour as the week previous, he stood in the square waiting for the coach.

But this night the coach was nearly full, and he was obliged to take a seat near the door. He looked around; there in the same corner, in the same position, in the same shawl and bonnet, precisely as she sat and looked the week before, sat the lady he wished—though he had not owned it—to see.

How provoking he could not speak to her.

A rough, coarse-looking man was sitting beside her, her veil was drawn over her face, and she had not even looked at him since he entered the coach. There was little said by the passengers during their ride, and in due time they stopped before the office door.

Mr. Tremor jumped out, but stationed himself at the foot of the steps; he knew she would get out last. They passed out, young men, old men, and some very pretty maidens; but he had no interest in them. At last he saw her figure; the veil was thrown back, the light fell full upon her face, and it was, in truth, a pretty face to look upon. He held out his hand to assist her in alighting, and at that instant she caught his eye. He bowed, and said "Good evening."

But the street was not muddy to-night. She sprang quickly down the steps, without touching the offered hand, and before he could think, she was gone. He looked down the street, and saw her retreating figure with the boy, who had been in waiting, and who Mr. Tremor wished anywhere but where he was.

Mr. Tremor wouldn't own it, but he was a little chagrined. She might, at least, have said good evening, it would have been no more than common politeness, for she could not help knowing him, for the light fell as full upon his face as upon hers.

Another week; and it must be owned that all thought that week Mr. Tremor took a strange fancy to gaze in the face of every young lady he met in the street wearing a blanket shawl and bonnet trimmed with blue, and as blanket shawls were much worn this season, and as blue was the prevailing color, he had often to look around as he walked the streets of the city, but ever unsuccessful; the face he was in search of was not there.

Another week, and again he stood in the square waiting for the coach. He was obliged to wait some time, for more than usually frequent of being late, he had hurried away, and was in consequence too early. It came at last. He opened the door, and there she sat in the same corner, in the same position, and as good luck would have it, all alone. Mr. Tremor was persevering; he was not to be balked this time; he walked the full length of the coach, and taking a seat directly opposite the lady, said:

"Good evening."

She returned the salutation, for how could she help it.

"It is a very cold evening," said he, rubbing his hands.

"It is intensely cold," she replied, drawing her shawl still closer around her.

A book lay in the lady's lap. In moving to adjust her shawl it fell. Mr. Tremor picked it up; he opened it and looked at the title page, for the coach lamp was between them. It was not a novel. Mr. Tremor was glad, for he despised the trashy romances of the day. No, it was a scientific work, and one that he had read himself with much delight.

"Excuse me," said he, "for taking so much liberty, and allow me to express a little surprise at finding such a work in the hands of a young lady."

She smiled an arch, roguish sort of smile, but said nothing in reply.

"It is a work," said he, "I very much admire. There are others by the same author; allow me to ask if you have read them?"

Yes, she had.

"How were you pleased with them?"

"Very much, sir."

"Young ladies are apt to take but little interest in works of this kind."

The lady smiled again, and Mr. Tremor could but admire the sweet blue eyes as they rested for a moment on his face.

The book suggested other topics of conversation. Mr. Tremor asked if she had attended the lectures delivered the previous winter on scientific subjects by a distinguished lecturer. Yes, she had attended, and received a great deal of pleasure and instruction therefrom. So they talked upon the lectures for a while, and Mr. Tremor found the lady quite companionable, for though not saying a great deal, she was a good listener, and when she did speak, her remarks showed an intelligent mind, and a full understanding of the subject of conversation. Mr. Tremor was delighted, and was very sorry when the coach stopped at the office. He ardently hoped that that boy of thirteen would not be there. Alas for human hopes! The omnibus door opened, and a very gentle, fine-looking young man stood ready to wait upon the young lady out.

Mr. Tremor had nothing to do but to walk home alone as usual, and his mind was not as calm as was his wont. But why should he be disturbed? The lady, of course, was nothing to him, and why should he be vexed that a young man had waited upon her home? But vexed he was; the equanimity of his mind was certainly disturbed by the circumstance; the boy of thirteen was bad enough, but the young man was infinitely worse.

Some few weeks passed. No matter what day Mr. Tremor went out of town, still on his return at the usual time there sat the lady in the same place and the same position in the coach. Some times there were others in the coach, and sometimes they were alone, but always at the end of their route stood the boy or the young man to wait upon her home. They met so often that she began to greet him like an acquaintance, and to converse with him without restraint. She would even smile upon him when he entered the coach, and bid him good evening when she turned to go away with her companion.

But he had not been able to find out anything particular about her, though to be sure he had not made many inquiries—for why should he? There was a little mystery about her. Why should she be in the coach every evening at this particular time? He should rather like to know her.

One night it happened—and it was not an unusual occurrence—that Mr. Tremor and the lady were the only occupants of the coach. It was a stormy night, the snow was falling quite fast, and the wind was very high, altogether a very uncomfortable evening, though they did not think so, for they were engaged in a very agreeable conversation. On their arrival at the office, Mr. Tremor waited upon the lady out, and looking round found no one was in waiting for her. A thrill of delight passed through his frame; the lady, too, looked around for her usual companion, and she seemed anything but delighted. Mr. Tremor spoke:

"Your companion seems not to be in waiting for you, will you oblige me by accepting me as an escort to your home?"

"I think it is hardly necessary to trouble you. Doubtless, my brother will soon be here. I will wait a few minutes."

"Her brother," thought Mr. Tremor. "Ah, but which is her brother, the boy or the young man?"

They waited a short time, but no one came.

"I think," said he, with seeming concern for her, "you risk your health by standing in the storm. Your brother, I think, will not come. Allow me the pleasure of going with you to your home."

"I am very sorry to trouble you—and in such a violent storm."

"Indeed, it is no trouble, but a great pleasure, and the storm is nothing to me."

And truth it was, and it was pleasant to him than the brightest moonlight, and he blessed each flake of snow that fell, for he was persuaded that the storm was the cause of the brother's absence.

O, Mr. Tremor, why do you not pause and consider what you are bringing upon yourself, leaving your own comfort and ease to go home in a driving snow storm with a young lady, whose name even you do not know!

The distance was not great, just down two or three streets, and then she stopped before the door of a brick house, with nothing marked or peculiar about it. The lady paused at the door a moment before she rang the bell. Should she ask him to walk in or not? Common politeness seemed to say yes, but she hesitated. Her hand was on the bell.

"Will you not walk in, sir, for a few moments?" she asked.

It was his turn to hesitate.

"No," said he, "I think not."

Yet his face seemed to say he would like to do so very much. She did not press the matter, but she thanked him for his kindness, and said she was very sorry to have troubled him.

Do not speak of it as a trouble. It has been to me a great pleasure.

Take care, Mr. Tremor, don't let your feelings carry you away. The door opens, the lady says good night, which he returns; the door closes, and he stands there alone. There's a bright light in the parlor, there's a sound of voices. It looks pleasant in doors, but very gloomy out of doors. He almost wishes he had asked her to walk in; he wishes the house well so that he may know it another time—the third from the corner.

Mr. Tremor returned to his boarding place. His room seemed very gloomy; he sat down to read, but he could not fix his attention; he took up his pen, but it would not do; his well-balanced mind was a little shaken from its accustomed equilibrium, and at last, not knowing what else to do, he went to bed. In his sleep he dreamed he was walking through snow-drifts, and walking through long interminable streets in search of the house where he had stopped that night. At last he found it; but a very gentle-looking young man stood sentinel at the door, and the boy of thirteen was sitting on the door step, and looked up with a very impatient look, and asked him what he wanted, and if he had lost anything. Then a sweet musical voice sounded in his ear, and asked him if he would not walk in.

A tap at the door; the servant enters.

"Breakfast is ready, sir; the bell has rung twice, and mistress sent me up to see if it may be your own sick."

"Sick!"

He started from his bed; the sun was streaming into his room, he had indeed slept very late. The storm had ceased, the morning was beautiful. Mr. Tremor ate his breakfast in great haste, and hurried to his place of business. No, he directed his steps in quite a different direction, even to the house where he had stopped the previous night. The third from the corner, there he found it, different even to the house at the corner. He walked by, and as he did so, he looked up, just as any one would look, to the name on the door. It was "Smith." He walked along to the foot of the street, then turned and walked back again.

Just as he passed this time, the door opened, and the lady herself walked out. She blushed slightly as she recognized him, but frankly held out her hand, and said:

"Good morning."

Mr. Tremor inquired after her health; hoped she took no cold from her exposure to the storm.

"None at all," said she. "I am so used to all weathers I do not mind a little snow. My brother was sick last night, and unable to come for me. My older brother, trusting to his coming for me, not knowing of his illness, explains my being left alone."

Mr. Tremor breathes freely; the young man also a brother—the thought, spite of himself, was a relief.

She walked on with a quick step towards the office; he, though he knew business called him, went with her. The omnibus was just ready to start.

"I almost feared I should be late," said she, as she opened the coach door.

Mr. Tremor had half a mind to follow her; but he did not.

"Good morning," said he, "and a pleasant ride."

"Thank you," said she, in a sweet voice, and with a happy smile.

The coach started. She bowed to him as he stood watching her departure; then he turned and walked down the street like a man in a dream. "Smith"—that was all; not very definite, truly. It might be John, James, Joseph, or David; but yet what matters it to him?

Be careful, Mr. Tremor, these women are bewitching things. Are you aware that the sweet voice of a pretty face of Miss Smith may be the ruin of your peace, easy bachelor life?

"I pity you from my soul, I do," said Mr. Tremor's friend one night, as he started away from his door. "Such a long, lonesome ride as you will have in that slow, plodding omnibus."

"Your pity is quite misplaced," said he, cheerfully, "I find it anything but lonesome."

"I think you must enjoy your evenings with us, or you would not take so much trouble to join us all through the winter. Do you know we feel ourselves highly complimented!"

A smile passed over the face of Mr. Tremor as he politely rejoined:

"I indeed feel myself amply repaid for all the trouble I take."

And so would have thought, to have seen him five minutes after, sitting by the side of Miss Smith. Judging from appearances, their acquaintance had progressed very rapidly since the night of the snow storm. She welcomed him with a smile and a warm pressure of the hand—if we are not mistaken, the little hand was retained longer after he had taken the seat she seemed to have reserved for him by her side.

At the office, no boy or man stood ready to escort Miss Smith home. On the contrary, Mr. Tremor quite as a matter of course took her arm within his, and walked with her to the third house from the corner, where again, as quite a matter of course, he went in. At what time he came out again is not exactly known.

Somewhat, by means of Yankee shrewdness, or some other way, Mr. Tremor had ascertained that Miss Smith was teacher in a school some little distance from the city, which explained her daily journeys to and fro in the coach. Her evenings were devoted to the study of music and the languages, which accounted for her reticence so late. He had ascertained, also, that her brother and herself were the sole support of a widowed mother and two children, the boy of thirteen and a girl of ten, and this was all—a common story enough, certainly.

But Mr. Tremor's time had come. He had seen handsome ladies than Miss Smith, and escaped with a whole heart; he had passed by richer ones, and had not given them a passing thought. But the facts had decreed that his bachelorship should end, and now he was truly over head and ears in love with Miss Smith.

O, Mr. Tremor, what will your friends say? And you have no proud of your freedom, so happy in your state of single-blessedness! Adieu to your quiet evenings; adieu to a hundred of your little bachelor comforts. You must lay them all down at the feet of Miss Smith. As Mrs. Tremor, she will expect to know your whereabouts; she will expect to be counselor in all your affairs. If not, perhaps, her pretty lips will pout, and her blue eyes flash a little, and her sweet voice be raised just a note or two higher.

As Mrs. Tremor, she will expect to hold with one hand, at least, the strings of your purse; she will expect to go with you on little excursions to the seashore, or the country; perhaps she will see her heart upon a trip to Niagara, or to the White Mountains. As Mrs. Tremor, she may not like the moonlight, but "po!" is sworn to say of her housewifery. As Miss Smith, I presume she never hears it. In fine, Mrs. Tremor may not be in all things just like Miss Smith.

And can it be that you have brought it voluntarily upon yourself? Do you stand upon the verge of this fearful gulf with your eyes open, and make no effort to escape?

Mr. Tremor has changed his mind; he thinks he is a lonesome man; his evenings, when not with Miss Smith, are long and gloomy. Business does very well for his mind, but a dry nourishment for his heart, and that part of his organization has of late begun to grow troublesome. It used to sleep so quietly in its place, that sometimes, as is the case when any part of the system does not make itself known occasionally by aches and twinges, he almost forgot he possessed such a sensitive system.

He begins to think that a female companion after all may be preferable to one of his own sex, for they are not conceited and egotistical. He begins, too, to take an interest in houses, begins to inquire the price of furniture, studies the patterns of carpets, and finds to his own surprise that he has quite a taste for household matters. It is in truth a gone case with Mr. Tremor; he is engaged, and it is to be married to Miss Smith.

The last act of the drama approaches; the scene nearly the same as in the opening, namely—the square of a suburban town, the hour earlier, just at twilight, dramatic persons, nearly the same, lanterns and umbrellas dispensed with, for the evening is fair. There is a rustling of silks, a flashing of jewels, a gleaming of white kids and light veils in the deepening twilight; the party come dressed for a wedding or some place of amusement; they seem merry, too, as at the opening of the drama; but the merriment is subdued, for there are people coming and going on the street. The roll of an omnibus is heard in the distance. It approaches—empty.

"How many will your coach carry?" says one.

"As many as can get in," is the reply.

So they all get in, seven ladies and seven gentlemen; ten cents a head, then says the driver to himself, for he has learned not to count his passengers till they are all inside; and the coach moves on.

"It is very singular," says one, "that he should see his lady that very night for the first time in this coach."

"His time had come," says another.

"He will be lonesome no more," another said.

"I fancy he is in somewhat of a tremor about this time," is the first speaker.

"Well, I rejoice in his good fortune," says another. "It would be a pity for such a fine fellow to live and die a bachelor."

"You've got caught in the trap yourself, and like to see others in the same predicament," says a single lady of the party.

"We will have no disparaging remarks against matrimony to-night," is the reply, "for reason and revelation say it is not good for man to live alone."





[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE WIND.

BY A. H. REEVE.

I'm untroubled by mortal's bounds  
But try with me my spacious rounds;  
O'er land and sea,  
With boundless glow,  
I take my flight  
By day or night;  
O'er brooks and streams  
I breathe a sigh,  
Where soft moonbeams  
So gently lie.  
And then away on airy wing,  
Through rosy bowers, I laugh and sing.

O'er rustling fields—through cloudless sky,  
On time to pleasant mood I fly;  
And with a song,  
I waft along  
The laden hawk  
Like a meteor's spark;  
But awful scenes  
Are my delight,  
Where lightning gleams  
With fearful light—  
When hills and valleys, bending, quake  
And sturdy mountains, trembling, shake!

With manly joy 'tis then I rise,  
And hunt the forests through the skies;  
And plough the ground  
With deafening sound—  
With terror ring  
Each living thing  
And by their names  
The mountains roar,  
And o'er the plains  
Whirl down the trees,  
And length to see the storm's mad dance,  
O'er desolations that I make!

Then for the ocean swift I go,  
With wildly mad, roiling bow;  
Rolling the waves  
For mortal's grave;  
And rend each sail  
With horrid wall;  
And o'er the main  
O'er the sea  
With the fearful blast,  
This, this is glo!  
And when engulfed, the sailor dies,  
I sing his requiem through the skies.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE LAME MAN'S MESSAGE:

—OR—

## NEPHEW AND NIECE.

BY ANON WINSLOW, JR.

It was winter in the great city. In one of those mean streets was a well-filled store, and the owner stood behind his desk reckoning up, perhaps, and comparing his "profits and loss," while a number of clerks were busy in waiting upon customers. This owner was a young man, not more than five or eight-and-twenty, and he seemed to have an eye to business, though whether or his gaze was regulated by any well-governed principle remains to be seen. He was a spare-built, fashionable-looking man, with a pale face, a low brow, and a profusion of artificially curled ringlets hanging about his temples. He had very dark eyes, but a close observer could have seen that they were of a greenish hue, and that their light was all outward and fascinating. His lips were thicker than looked well, and his mouth was larger than he wished it was. He was very fashionably dressed, and a vast display of jewelry bedecked his person.

Such was James Merton. His father and mother had both died, and he had been left with only some one or two thousand dollars with which to commence life. He came to the city and obtained a clerkship. He was shrewd and unscrupulous, and he made some money, and at length he managed to marry an heiress. With her money he had set up a store, and was now to use the language of his own coinage, "doing a smashing business." It was a "smashing" business.

James Merton stood there behind his desk and watched his salesmen.

"Mr. Peters," he called, in a low, business-like tone.

The person whom he addressed was a young salesman that was at that moment trading with a well-dressed old lady.

"Does that woman want some of that velvet?" Merton asked, as Peters came close to the desk.

"Yes, sir," very deferentially returned the salesman.

"She is a stranger?"

"Yes, sir."

"We may never see her again. Probably some one from the country. Get off a piece of that native five if you can. Remember, it is the nicest of Genoa fabric. Eight dollars if you can. Be careful, now."

Peters went back and sold the lady three yards of the velvet, "number five," for seven dollars and fifty cents a yard. It was a superb looking piece of goods, and apparently figured with the most sumptuous materials. James Merton's "profits" column received an addition from that sale of twelve dollars. That was the character of the business part of the man.

It was drawing towards the close of the day, and the young merchant took out his bank book and ran it over, and then he looked at the list of "notes payable." He found that on the following day he must pay a note of twelve hundred dollars. He reckoned up all his available funds, and he made out four hundred and some odd dollars. There was a cloud came over his brow, and that cloud grew deeper as his eye rested upon the record of other notes, the maturity of which was not far off. "I wish a hundred old women would come in and buy velvets," he muttered to himself, but that could not be expected, so he put on his great coat and started out. In half an hour he returned, and having shaken the snow from his coat, he hung it up, and then sat down by the stove. He had been to some dozens of his friends, but not one of them could promise to assist him. The truth was, they didn't like the "smashing" character of himself or his business.

Mr. Merton had sat thus some fifteen minutes,

when he was aroused by hearing some one inquire for him. He looked up and saw an old man hobbling towards him on a crutch. It was a very old man—eighty at least—and very lame. The snow stood in great masses upon his garments, and he seemed cold and fatigued.

"Is this Mr. James Merton?" he asked.

"Yes," sturdily replied the merchant.

"You don't seem to recollect me," resumed the old man.

Merton looked up and a ray of interest shot across his face.

"This isn't old Varney Bolster," he said.

"Yes he is," returned the old man.

"And where are you from?"

"From Ohio."

"And how is my uncle?"

"Dead!" uttered Merton, starting up. "Did you say dead?"

"Yes. He died a month ago."

"Fortunate, by Jove."

"What?" cried the old man, in blank surprise.

"Ah, you misunderstood me," quickly spoke Merton, but yet with much perturbation. "I meant that it was fortunate I had the news."

Varney Bolster looked keenly into the young man's face, and a close observer could have seen that there was a dubious expression upon his time-worn features.

"Are you acquainted with my uncle Moses's affairs?" at length asked the merchant, in low, anxious tones.

"Yes."

"Has he made a will?"

"Yes."

"Ha! And do you know its contents—its purport?"

"Yes."

"Tell me about it."

The young man breathed heavily as he asked the question, for he knew that his Uncle Moses had nearly a million of dollars to dispose of.

"His will—and he made but one—gives nearly everything to you."

"To me?" cried the youthful speculator, clapping his hands with sudden emotion. "I thought so. I knew the old fellow would do the handsome thing. By Jove, but I'm safe, now. Let the brokers and note-shavers whine now. The old man lived a long while—but better late than never. And so he is dead at last. I hope he was buried decently."

"Your uncle was buried decently, sir, for he had friends about him that cared for him," reiterated the old man, looking with contempt upon the unfeeling nephew.

"O, and so should I have cared for him, if I had been there," said Merton; "but since I wasn't, what's the use of making long faces at me. The old man couldn't possibly have asked to live any longer. But what's to be done now? Must I go on to Columbus? I think he did not move from there."

"There's where he died. But you need not go on unless you see fit. For his executors, or some one empowered by them, will be here in the course of a week to see you."

"So, no. Well, old Varney, I'm truly thankful to you for your information. I have a little brandy in my counting-room. Won't you take a drop?"

"No, sir."

"But it's cold, and 'twill do you good."

"A good deal would suit me better."

"Haven't you engaged your room at the hotel, yet?"

"No."

"Then it's time you were about it. You'll find any quantity of 'em about our city."

"Then you have not gone to housekeeping, yet?"

"Certainly."

"And could I not find a shelter beneath your own roof?"

"Why, bless me, old Varney, the very sight of such a lame old clogger would throw my wife into hysterics. She is a most sensitive person."

"But not very sensible," distinctly pronounced the old man.

"Be careful, sir," said Merton, showing a mark of anger. "Remember of whom you are speaking."

"You forget, James, when you were a boy, and I used to to dandle you upon my lame knee. You didn't shun me then—and even at that time my hair was gray."

"Never mind that. I am busy, now. Much obliged for your information. If you are in need, you may—"

But the old man did not wait to hear any more, and so the merchant did not finish his sentence. The outer door closed upon the retiring form of the lame messenger, and then James Merton once more put on his coat. He moved quickly now, for his spirits were up.

In half an hour more he had told the news of his uncle's death to many of his business neighbors, and he had the promise of more than money enough to meet his to-morrow's payment.

In a very fashionably furnished house, and in one of the drawing-rooms of said house, sat two females. One of them was the wife of James Merton. She was a tallish woman, and a few years older than her husband. A single look at her would assure any one that she had been reared in idleness. She sat now upon the piano stool, but she was not playing. She was leaning languidly upon the instrument, and her long hair was hanging in curls about her face and neck. She was, perhaps, pretty, but there was nothing intellectual or winning in her countenance. Her face was a pale, cold blank, with nothing written upon it save indifference and indolence.

The other female was not more than twenty years of age, and if she was not so beautiful as some, she was at least interesting in the extreme. Her face was a face that improved upon acquaintance. One did not see all its beauties at the first glance. Her true loveliness was not to be seen until you knew her heart and her soul, and when the holy purity of those were known, then her face looked beautiful indeed. Her hair did

not curl, nor were there any pearls or precious stones in it. No pearls flashed upon her person, and the only ornament she wore was a plain gold ring upon one of her fingers. It was the dying gift of her mother, and, save a good name and a virtue of spotless purity, it was all she inherited. Her name was Adelia Williams, and she was a cousin of James Merton. She was the only child of Moses Merton's only sister, and James was the child of Moses Merton's brother.

For nearly a year Adelia had lived with her cousin, but she occupied the place really of a menial. To be sure she sat with her cousin's wife, but she was very near to her ladyship.

"Adelia," said Nancy Merton—that was the lady's name—"move those books away and shut up the piano. I shall play no more. And then you may put some more coals upon the grate."

Adelia did the work thus laid down, and then resumed her sewing. But she was soon called to trim the lamp, and then to fix the fire again, and then Mrs. Merton wished her to fix the pillow upon the lounge so that she could "repose."

At about seven o'clock James Merton came in. There was a well satisfied look upon his face, and he smiled very blandly as he greeted his wife.

"I think you must have made an excellent day's business," said his wife, after she had arisen to a sitting posture. "I haven't seen you look so good-natured for a long while."

"I have done a good business," said Mr. Merton, emphatically. "I have a note of twelve hundred dollars to pay to-morrow, and I have raised the money."

"Borrowed it, I suppose," said his wife.

"Exactly."

"I see nothing very gratulatory in that. You'll have it to pay."

"So I shall," uttered James, rubbing his hands with great satisfaction; "but I have the means. The good-gods of wealth are thrown open, and the tide is setting upon me. Guess how?"

"How can I guess?"

"True—how can you. But I'll tell you. My uncle Moses is dead!"

"Dead! Uncle Moses dead?" uttered Adelia, with quick pain.

"Yes—and what is there wonderful in that? He was old enough to die—four-score years is long enough for any man to live."

"He was very rich, I think," said Mrs. Merton, hopefully.

"Yes, worth a million, at least."

"And how has he disposed of it?"

"Left it all to me—all, all, to me."

"Are you sure, Mr. M?"

"Yes. Old Varney Bolster has come on, and he told me all about it."

"Poor old Varney," murmured Adelia, looking up. "How I should like to see him. Has he come home with you, James?"

"Come home with me?" returned the merchant, elevating his eyebrows. "Of course not. He looked a little too shabby to bring here."

"And he is very lame, too," said Adelia, in a meaning tone.

"Is he? How thankful I am he didn't come, to be sure. The sight of a deformed man throws me into convulsions."

"Yes," resumed Adelia, with a sidelong glance at her cousin, "old Varney is very lame, or, he used to be, and the doctors said he always would be, for his knee was fractured."

"Mercy, Adelia, don't speak of such frightful things," uttered the sensitive wife, with an excellent shudder.

"Yet," persisted Adelia, "it is worth while to know how he became lame. Once a mad, frightened horse was rushing towards a prodigal, and there was a boy upon the horse's back. The young merchant rushed before that plunging horse and stopped him, and saved the life of the boy, but in doing so, he broke his—"

"Stop, stop, I command you," cried Mrs. Merton.

"I was only going to add that if Varney had not stopped that horse, you would never have had James Merton for a husband!"

The young merchant looked daggers at his fair cousin, and so did the merchant's wife; but the word was spoken, and James Merton remembered how that poor old man had once saved his life. But Adelia was silent, now, and the storm soon passed over.

"You are sure your uncle has left you his property?" said Nancy, at the end of a silence which had lasted for some minutes.

"O, yes. He has always spoken of me as his heir, and this old lame man has seen the will; and he moreover assures me that some one will be on from Columbus shortly, to fix up matters. We will have that new house, now, wife, and our circle of acquaintance shall be somewhat altered."

"It must be," returned the lady. "But," she continued, with energy, "William must either leave us now, or else pay more attention to your wishes."

"Ah, what now?" inquired Mr. Merton, gazing first upon his cousin, and then upon his wife.

"I told her I should speak to you on the subject. That country fellow has been here again."

"What, Walter Seaton?"

"Yes, I think that is his name."

"Is this so, Adelia?"

"It is," replied the maiden.

"And what do you mean by such conduct? I have told you that you should not see the fellow here at my house."

"He came, and surely I was not going to drive him away. He is an upright, honorable young man, and his society is pleasing to me. He was a schoolmate of yours, and—"

"Enough, say no more," interrupted Mr. Merton. "I suppose you would have the fellow for a husband, if he should pluck up the courage to ask you."

"He has asked me, sir."

"What! Has he asked the audacity?"

"He has—and I told him—"

"What?"

"That I loved him, and that I would be his wife just as soon as he could feel able to go to house-keeping."

"Well, that is fine, truly," uttered Merton, with a blank look. "You will make a splendid wife for a common day-laborer."

"Mr. Seaton is a carpenter, sir, and his occupation is not only honorable, but it is lucrative."

"Very," said Merton, sarcastically. "But," he added, in an altered tone, "there are some stern realities to this business. I have been acquainted with more than once already, if I made a practice of associating with that carpenter—for it was known by some means that he was a townsmen of mine, and once a schoolmate. He has been coming here, and he has been known to remain a whole evening. Now I have just one word more to say. If Walter Seaton comes here again, and you admit him to the house during our absence, you will leave my roof never to return. I am determined to have some control over my own premises. You know that you can make an eligible match, if you choose. There is my clerk, Peters—he has hinted to me that he would marry you; and he will be a wealthy man, for he has shrewdness and business tact; and now that I am wealthy, of course I should be willing to assist you some if you complied with my wishes."

"I am well acquainted with the character of Mr. Peters," returned Adelia, "and I know him to be a shallow-minded, superficial, unsteady, dishonest person. Even in your own store he has practiced duplicity and straight-out deception."

"You had better beware," uttered the young merchant, with a flush of anger upon his face. "Keep a little more guard over that tongue of yours."

"O, my cousin, I know what I say. A lady of my acquaintance went into your store only day before yesterday after some rich velvet for a bonnet pattern. She told me of this herself. Peters waited upon her, and he showed her a piece of stuff which he told her was double-napped, royal-dressed Genoa velvet, and that the weight of pure silk in a yard of it was worth more than most fine velvets. He asked her eight dollars a yard for it. Now that lady happened to have a brother who was engaged in the same business, and he has brought some of that same kind of stuff home as a curiosity. It was not worth more than three or four dollars at the outside. You should look to your clerks with more—"

"Silence! I am aware of Mr. Peters's character, and what you now say is false. I want to hear no more. You have heard what I have said, and you may govern your tongue accordingly. Remember, you either drop the acquaintance of Seaton altogether, or else you leave my house. You can do as you please."

James Merton was considerably perplexed when he began to speak, but he worked it off, and by the time he concluded he had worked himself into a state of majestic dignity. But Adelia was not so much moved as he had expected.

"I can go," she calmly said, "for I have not been idle here, and shall not probably have to work any harder, let me go where I will. I believe I have paid my way since I have been beneath your roof, so you have not much claim upon either my gratitude or my obedience. But let this pass now. It is not a fit time for such work when we have but just received the intelligence of the death of our noble-hearted old uncle."

James Merton had his mouth made up, to reply to this, but he did not. The truth was he felt very angry with his fair cousin, but the news he had received of his uncle's demise counterbalanced it, and in a few moments more he told Adelia that she might leave the room, and after she was gone he and his wife spent a long while in planning for their future course. Nancy was very pleasant, now, for the golden sun that had just arisen upon her warmed her heart with an effervescent beat of gladness. Not one word was spoken, nor one thought entertained of the goodness of him that had departed, nor did they speak of the death-stroke other than as a stroke of luck for them.

It was on the day following the events just recorded—or rather on the evening of that day, that a young man sat by a table in a plain but well-lit and quiet boarding-house. He was somewhere about four-and-twenty years of age, and upon his countenance were revealed those unmistakable characteristics that denote the studious, intellectual man. He was a person of fair proportions, and as the rays of the lamp fell upon his features, and dwelt among the clustering curls of nut brown hair that swept back from his high brow, they revealed a face of more than ordinary manly beauty. Such was Walter Seaton. He had left his native village, after having learned his trade, and come to the great city to work. He came not to hunt up work, but to fulfill an engagement. He had, in days gone by, been a schoolmate of Adelia Williams, and even when they were but children they had talked of love, for Walter learned his ends of Adelia's father. It is no wonder, then, that they should meet now, and that they should renew the pledges of their childhood.

On the present evening Walter had one of the small sitting-rooms to himself, for the rest of the male boarders had gone out to places of amusement. He sat there and pored over his book, and while he was reading, one of the servants came in and announced that a young lady wished to speak with him.

He quickly started to the door, and there he found Adelia Williams. He rose upon her into the sitting-room, and as soon as they were alone, the young man inquired with some signs of surprise, what had called her out on such a cold night.

"I shall speak plainly," she said, with some perturbation, "for I know that I may look for counsel to you."

At this point she related a part of the scene that had occurred at her cousin's. Walter mor-

ed nearer to her side when she had finished, and taking her hand, he said:

"Dear Adelia, I am almost glad your cousin has spoken, for now our proper course of action is made plain to us. Thave between twelve and thirteen hundred dollars in the bank, and we can as well commence our united work of life now as at any time. I am sure of the best of wages, and my employers spoke no longer ago than last week of letting me have one of their houses. They learned by some means that I had some thoughts of marriage. There is a pretty little tenement out on the new avenues, which I can have for one hundred fifty dollars a year, and I know it would suit you. It is in a quiet location, and among the most pleasant people. What say you? Come, we may as well fulfill our destiny now as at any time."

Adelia hung down her head, but it was not with confusion. She only meditated upon the proposal to which she had listened. At length she said, and she looked very happy as she spoke:

"You know best what we had better do. All is, if we are married now, I will do all I can to economize and make your burden light. I will be governed entirely by your decision."

"Then," uttered Walter, with a glow of happiness upon his features, "we will go at once to keeping house as partners for life. So shall it be, dearest, and God grant that we may be long spared to each other."

The happy young couple had just placed his arms about the maiden's neck, when the door-bell rang again, and shortly afterwards the door of the sitting-room was opened, and an old, lame man entered. He stopped near the table and hesitated.

"Is this Walter Seaton?" he asked, leaning heavily upon his crutch.

"It is, sir," returned the young man, quickly rising and placing a chair near the fire.

"Though I should find you asleep," continued the lame man, as he sat down in the proffered chair. "But perhaps you don't know me."

"It is good old Varney Bolster!" cried Adelia, with unfeigned joy.

The old man started, lifting both hands.

"What?" he exclaimed, lifting both hands.

"Is this my little Delia—my little Delia Williams?"

"Yes, Varney," returned the fair girl, hastening to the old man's side and throwing her arms about his neck. "Yes, it is your little Delia. Don't you remember me?"

"I do now, you blessed child!" answered the old man, while the tears started to his eyes, as he felt the warm kiss of the innocent, warm-hearted girl upon his cheek. "But how did you know me so quickly?"

"O I knew you were in the city. My cousin told me so."

"Your cousin?"

"Yes, James Merton."

"Ah," uttered Varney, while a cloud swept over his wrinkled face. "Then you have seen James?"

"Yes, I live with him."

"And did he tell you that your uncle was dead?"

"Yes," murmured Adelia, sadly, as she sat back in her chair. "He told me so. O, I had hoped I might see uncle Moses once more, for he was such a good kind uncle to us all. But he is happy now—for such as he cannot be else."

"Happy in the spirit-hue. Did he speak of us before he died?"

"I heard him speak of all his friends. But did James tell you of your uncle Moses's will?"

"Yes."

"I am almost sorry you should have been forgotten in that will."

"O do not speak of that," said the maiden, earnestly. "Uncle Moses has done much for me. He has done much for my mother. For over a year he supported her wholly. He has done much for us, and I should be ungrateful indeed could I now cherish a single regret on account of his will. I can only regret that he did not live longer to enjoy the property he had left behind him. But he was well cared for! He died happy, did he not?"

"Your uncle died very calmly," returned the old man, regarding the lovely girl with a beaming, moistened eye. "But tell me why you are with your cousin?"

Adelia related to him how she had gone to live with James after he was married—how she had gone to help his wife, and how she had lived there ever since. She spoke more freely to her present listener than she would have done to even her own uncle, were he living, for old Varney Bolster was always regarded as a kind of confidant by all his acquaintances. Bolster was no relative of the Mertons, but he had lived with Moses from a boy. Moses Merton's father had taken him from the poor-house when only about ten years old, and he had been a faithful domestic in the family ever since. Adelia used to love him when she was only a child, because he was so kind and good to her, and though it had been over ten years since she had seen him previous to the present occasion, yet she smiled an almost requital smile when he found out that she had planned soon to become a wife.

"Never mind," said he, as Adelia blushed. "I have known the stock from which Walter descended, and I believe it is good; but I know something of him, for this evening, when I went to his employers to hunt him up, they took trouble to praise him prodigiously—O, you needn't hang down your head so, Walter, for surely 'tis no evil to have good men speak well of you."

Some more conversation was held on by-gone times—Adelia wept kindly in memory of her good uncle—and the old man told how they had lived in their western home. And at length the maiden said that she must return. Of course



"Yes, you blessed child," cried the old man catching her to his bosom. "Yes, my own sweet Delia, 'tis your uncle Moses."

tion of Russia consists almost entirely of material. Of the vessels which frequent Russian ports, only one-sixth part belongs to Russian subjects, and the commerce of the principal seaports is in the hands of foreigners.

a gangster rowdies, and who seized upon the young hero on account of his smart appearance as one who could readily be worked into the traces and aid in consummating many of his mischievous schemes. Jim was far ahead

"Well,—what became of him? Perhaps he was not wholly reclaimed," responded the man.

"I was going to say that it did not end there. The lady gave him her card with the motto—

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